That Govt. should play the role of a catalyst in promoting quality and competitiveness.

That the educational and scientific infrastructure in the area of micro-electronics be strengthened to meet the need for technically trained man-power.

(c) The report of the JSC is being examined by the Government.

Death of HAL Workers

2785. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that some HAL workers died recently while cleaning the underground pipe line of the plant;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any inquiry into the circumstances leading to their death; and

(c) if so, what is the outcome thereof and what action has been taken by Government in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI):(a) to (c) A contract for cleaning the Neutralisation Plant suction Tanks situated in the HAL, Koraput Division, was awarded to a private contractor. During this work on 12th July, 1988 two contract labourers viz. S/Shri Rajesh Hyal and Nidhan Khosla, and a Company employee Shri G. C. Samal, who entered the tank were trapped inside and died. All efforts by the fire fighting personnel of the Division and the State Fire Fighting Team to extricate them proved futile and it was possible to take out the dead bodies of the three workers around 1800 hrs.

The cleaning work involved removal of debris from the bottom of the tanks and it was made clear that the removal was to be done through the manhole cover outlet by means of buckets, ropes etc. after completely dewatering the tanks. Both the contract enquiry and the letter awarding the contract had specifically mentioned the need for extra safety precautions as the neutralisation tank water contained toxic material.

HAL Management had constituted an enquiry committee to enquire into this accident. The enquiry report has revealed lapses on the part of the contractor in following safety measures. It has also shown lapses on the part of the officials in charge of award and supervision of the work. The HAL Management has suspended two concerned officers, the Executive Engineer (Factory) and the Assistant Executive Engineer, pending departmental enquiry. The Chairman, HAL, has also appointed an expert group to suggest standrad procedures to be followed for cleaning effluent tanks for ensuring safety of workmen.

An amount of Rs. 66,516 has been deposited by HAL on 30-7-1988 with Workmen's Commissioner under the Workmen's Compensation Act as compensation payable to late Shri G.C. Samal, a company employee, for disbursement to his legal heirs. Regarding two labourers of the contractor, it is the reponsibility of the contractor to deposit the compnesation under the Workmen's Compensation Act with the Workmen's Commissioner. The contractor has, accordingly, been advised by the HAL Management to deposit the compensation. Local HAL Management has, however, been advised to deposit the amount of compensation as Principal Employer with the Workmen's Commissioner, in

case the contractor fails to deposit the same. The compensation payable to late S/Shri N. Khosla and Rajesh Hyal under the Workmen's Compensation Act works out to Rs. 26,546·40 and Rs. 27,026.40 respectively. The Management has already offered employment to one of the dependents of each of the three deceased personnel.

Creation of posts in Delhi Judicial Service

2786. SHRI JERLIE E. TARIANG : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to fill more posts of Delhi Judicial service in near future; and

(b) if so, whether there s any proposal of Government to create new posts in Delhi keeping in view the large number of pending cases ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

2787. [*Transferred to the 29th August*, 1988.]

Repatriation of Defence personnel from Pakistan

2788. SHRI LAL. K. ADVANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the result of Government efforts during the last seventeen years to get released and repatriated the forty three missing Indian Defence personnel who have been languishing in Pakistani jails all this period;

(b) what is the next concrete action plan of Government in this regard; and

(c) what are the other forums, other than direct talks with Pakistan, at which Government are trying to solve this human problem of mental torture, agony and pain ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : (a) In response to Government's efforts to secure the release and repatriation of Indian missing defence personnel in Pakistan the Government of Pakistan has been taking the position that there are no such persons in their custody.

(b) Government propose to continue to press for the release and repatriation of the missing Indian defence personnel.

(c) Since this is a purely bilateral issue, Government are pursuing efforts to resolve it on a bilateral basis.

2789. [*Transferred to the 29th August*, 1988.]

Members of the SCOVA hand picked and nominated by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions

2790. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Members of the SCOVA were hand picked and nominated by the Ministry of Personnel, Pubic Grievances and Pensions without any particular criteria;

(b) if the answer to (a) is in the negative, what are the details of criteria;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there was neither a present agenda, nor any record of minutes of the proceedings and decisions where problem raised by pensioner's representatives were simply talked out; and